



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Navy Increases Alcohol Education, Awareness Efforts

NORFOLK, Va. — The Navy announced plans Jan. 23 to promote safety and provide education and awareness on the dangers of irresponsible alcohol use and the negative impact it has on mission accomplishment, by introducing the use of alcohol detection devices (ADD) across the fleet.

As part of the Secretary of the Navy's (SECNAV) 21st Century Sailor and Marine initiative, SECNAV approved the use of ADDs as another tool available for commanders to deter irresponsible use of alcohol and assist in identifying service members who may require support and assistance with alcohol use decisions.

U.S. Fleet Forces conducted a "pilot test" on ADDs with 13 sea and shore commands during the 100 days of summer from May 24 through Sept. 30, 2012. The data collected fleet-wide was used to develop the processes and policy for how best to implement a program Navy-wide.

The office of the Chief of Naval Operations approved OPNAV Instruction 5350.8 Jan. 22, which established policies and procedures for the use of the hand-held devices Navy-wide.

"Fleet feedback was instrumental in the development of this policy," said Adm. Bill Gortney, commander of U.S. Fleet Forces. "The test verified that the majority of our service members, who choose to drink alcohol, do so responsibly. It also verified that our commanding officers need a flexible program that serves to increase the Navy's awareness about the impacts of alcohol."

Gortney and Adm. Cecil Haney, commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet, in a joint-message to commanders said the new program will complement current command efforts to educate service members on the responsible use of alcohol.

The program also promotes standards of safety, education and training, and awareness.

According to the instruction, the objective of ADD is to promote safety and education on the effects of alcohol use decisions, and enhances leadership awareness and understanding of their unit's alcohol use culture.

“Deterring irresponsible use of alcohol is essential to the readiness of our fleet and ensuring the health and safety of our service members and units,” said Gortney. “Fleet Forces, in partnership with Pacific Fleet, will remain engaged in providing service members the tools and resources to make these responsible choices. The ADD is one of many tools commanders have to educate service members.”

Focused on those in a duty status and during normal working hours, the device is not intended to test those in an authorized leave or liberty status. Commanding officers may also use ADD results as a basis to further evaluate a service member’s fitness for duty through use of a Competence for Duty examination.

The instruction applies to all active duty, reserve and personnel from other services assigned to Navy units in any capacity.

Alcohol detection devices will begin arriving to commands in February.

A copy of OPNAVINST 5350.8 is available at www.npc.navy.mil.

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